Report Identification Number: RO-14-010 Prepared by: Rochester Regional Office

Issue Date: 1/20/2015

Thi	s report, prepared pursuant to section 20(5) of the Social Services Law (SSL), concerns:
	A report made to the New York Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR) involving the death of a child.
×	The death of a child for whom child protective services has an open case.
	The death of a child whose care and custody or custody and guardianship has been transferred to an authorized agency.
	The death of a child for whom the local department of social services has an open preventive service case.

The Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) is mandated by section 20 of the SSL to investigate or cause for the investigation of the cause and circumstances surrounding the death, review such investigation, and prepare and issue a fatality report in regard to the categories of deaths noted above involving a child, except where a local or regional fatality review team issues a report, as authorized by law.

Such report must include: the cause of death; the identification of child protective or other services provided or actions taken regard to such child and child's family; any extraordinary or pertinent information concerning the circumstances of the child's death; whether the child or the child's family received assistance, care or services from the social services district prior to the child's death; any action or further investigation undertaken by OCFS or the social services district since the child's death; and as appropriate, recommendations for local or state administrative or policy changes.

This report contains no information that would identify the deceased child, his or her siblings, the parent, parents, or other persons legally responsible for the child, and any members of the deceased child's household.

By statute, this report will be forwarded to the social services district, chief county executive officer, chairperson of the local legislative body of the county where the child died and the social services district that had legal custody of the child, if different. Notice of the issuance of this report will be sent to the Speaker of the Assembly and the Temporary President of the Senate of the State of New York.

This report may <u>only</u> be disclosed to the public by OCFS pursuant to section 20(5) of the SSL. It may be released by OCFS only after OCFS has determined that such disclosure is not contrary to the best interests of the deceased child's siblings or other children in the household.

OCFS' review included an examination of actions taken by individual caseworkers and supervisors within the social services district and agencies under contract with the social services district. The observations and recommendations contained in this report reflect OCFS' assessment and the performance of these agencies.

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# Abbreviations

Relationships	SM = Subject Mother	SC = Subject Child
BM = Biological Mother	BF = Biological Father	SF = Surviving Father
OC = Other Child	FM = Foster Mother	FF = Foster father
MGM/PGM = Maternal/parental	MGF/PGF = Maternal/parental	DCP = Day Care Provider
Grandmother	Grandfather	
Contacts	CW = Caseworker	CP = CasePlanner
LE = Law Enforcement	Dr = Doctor	ME = Medical Examier
EMS = Emergency Medical Services	CPR = Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation	FD = Fire Department
DC = Day Care		
Allegations	FX = Fractures	II = Internal Injuries
L/B/W = Lacerations/Bruises	S/D/S = Swelling/Dislocation	C/T/S = Choking/Twisting
/Welts	/Sprains	/Shaking
B/S = Burns / Scalding	CD/A = Child's Drug/Alcohol Use	MN = Medical Neglect
PD/AM = Parent's Drug	P/Nx = Poisoning/	XCP = Excessive Corporal
Alcohol Misuse	Noxious Substance	Punishment
M/FTTH= Malnutrition/Failure-	IF/C/S = Inadequate Food/Clothing	IG = Inadequate
-to-Thrive	/Shelter	Guardianship
LS = Lack of Supervision	Ab = Abandonment	SO = Sex Offender
OTH/COI = Other		
Miscellaneous	IND = Indicated	UNF = Unfounded
LDSS = Local Department of	ACS = Administration for	NYPD = New York City
Social Service	Children's Services	Police Department

# **Case Information**

**Report Type:** Child Deceased **Jurisdiction:** Monroe **Date of Death:** 04/29/2014

Age: 1 year(s) Gender: Male Initial Date OCFS Notified: 04/29/2014

#### **Presenting Information**

According to the Agency Reporting Form received from the Monroe County Department of Human Services (MCDHS) on May 1, 2014, the SC had a genetic disorder of Gaucher's Disease which inhibited his breathing, among many other things, and he was on an oxygen monitor. Suction was necessary to clear out mucus buildup. On 4/29/14 around 2:00am, the mother was in the shower and heard the oxygen monitor going off. The mother responded and the SC was blue in color. The mother called 911 and attempted to resuscitate the child. The mother was able to revive the SC. The SC was transported to the hospital and the SC's again stopped breathing but he was unable to be resuscitated. The SC died at the hospital at 3:57am.

The SC had been in and out of the hospital due to the disorder and complications with breathing, eating/swallowing, and decreased immune issues.

#### **Executive Summary**

This fatality report concerns the death of a one-year-old SC that occurred on 4/29/14. The death certificate indicated the cause of death was cardiac arrest due to a consequence of respiratory arrest and Gaucher's Disease. The manner of death was natural. When the SC died, there was an open CPS investigation regarding the family with MCDHS.

The CPS report was received on 2/11/14 with concerns of IG against the parents regarding the SC and the twin brother. The report alleged that: the subject child and the brother were diagnosed with Gauchers; a neurological disease. As a result of the disease, they were prone to having reflux. The parents were instructed on the dangers of propping their bottles but continued to do so raising concern that the boys could choke. During the course of the investigation, the parents denied propping the bottles and MCDHS did not witness this occur. The SC and the brother were hospitalized several times due to their condition.

On 4/29/14, the father and the eight-month-old (8mo) sister were visiting the brother at the hospital and the mother was home with the other children. The mother put the SC to bed around 9:00pm and appropriately connected his oxygen. The mother could hear the monitor and frequently checked on him. At 2:00am, the mother took a 10 minute shower. The father returned home and looked in on the SC who was sleeping and his oxygen stats were good. The SC was lying appropriate and the oxygen unit was on correctly. The father left the home with the 8mo sister to buy diapers. The mother started to go downstairs when she heard the SC's oxygen alarm. The mother found the SC blue in color; the mother began CPR and called 911. The mother revived the SC before the EMS arrived. EMS transported the SC to the hospital where he was pronounced dead at 3:57am.

MCDHS spoke with the family and appropriate collateral contacts to obtain information about the SC's death. MCDHS met regularly with the family in the home and made appropriate collateral contacts. MCDHS engaged the family with Preventive Services during the investigation but the family declined further services; including bereavement services.

MCDHS is to be commended on their investigation and their engagement with the family.

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Findings 1	Related to the CPS Investig	ation of the Fatality	
Safety Assessment:  • Was sufficient information gathe:	thered to make the decision re	corded on	
o Approved Initial Safety	v Assessment?	Yes	
	at the time of determination?	Yes	
·	e approved Initial Safety Assess	sment Yes	
Determination:			
<ul> <li>Was sufficient information ga allegations as well as any othe investigation?</li> </ul>	thered to make determination ers identified in the course of th	` /	
<ul> <li>Was the determination made appropriate?</li> </ul>	by the district to unfound or in	ndicate Yes	
Was the decision to close the case app	propriate?	Yes	
Was casework activity commensurate regulatory requirements?	e with appropriate and relevar	nt statutory or Yes	
<b>Was there sufficient documentation o</b>	of supervisory consultation?	Yes, the case rec the consultation.	ord has detail of
	Required Actions Related to the	e Fatality	
Are there Required Actions related to	o the compliance issue(s)? □Y	Yes ⊠No	
Fatality-R	Related Information and Inv	vestigative Activities	
	Incident Information		
<b>Date of Death:</b> 04/29/2014	Time of D	Death:	
County where fatality incident occur Was 911 or local emergency number Fime of Call: Did EMS to respond to the scene?		MONROE Yes 02:15 AM Yes	
At time of incident leading to death, l	had child used alcohol or drug		
Child's activity at time of incident:	ina cinia asca alconoi di alag.	J. 110	
☑ Sleeping	☐ Working	☐ Driving / Vehicle	occupant
☐ Playing	☐ Eating	☐ Unknown	•
☐ Other	_		
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Did child have supervision at time of incident leading to death? Yes

How long before incident was the child last seen by

caretaker? 10 Minutes

Is the caretaker listed in the Household Composition? Yes - Caregiver 1

At time of incident supervisor was: Not

impaired.

Total number of deaths at incident event:

Children ages 0-18: 1

## **Household Composition at time of Fatality**

Household	Relationship	Role	Gender	Age
Deceased Child's Household	Deceased Child	No Role	Male	1 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Father	No Role	Male	32 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Mother	No Role	Female	26 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Sibling	No Role	Female	8 Month(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Sibling	No Role	Female	3 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Sibling	No Role	Female	6 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Sibling	No Role	Female	7 Year(s)
Deceased Child's Household	Sibling	No Role	Male	1 Year(s)

#### **LDSS Response**

MCDHS found that there were consistent versions of events reported by the family and first responders. The mother reported that the SC had been tired recently and sleeping often. She stated that his oxygen levels had been dropping faster. The parents were following through with medical concerns for the SC. MCDHS offered bereavement services which the family refused.

MCDHS spoke with appropriate collateral contacts regarding the SC's death.

The hospital ED physician consulted with the Medical Examiner (ME) regarding an autopsy but the ME declined the case. The family then declined an autopsy.

## Official Manner and Cause of Death

**Official Manner:** Natural

**Primary Cause of Death:** From a medical cause

Person Declaring Official Manner and Cause of Death: Hospital physician

#### Multidisciplinary Investigation/Review

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Was the fatality reviewed by an OCFS approved Child Fatality Review Team? Yes

#### **CPS Fatality Casework/Investigative Activities** Unable to Yes No N/A **Determine** All children observed? |X|XWhen appropriate, children were interviewed? |X|П All appropriate Collaterals contacted? Was a death-scene investigation performed? |X||X|Coordination of investigation with law enforcement? Was there timely entry of progress notes and other required $\times$ documentation? **Fatality Safety Assessment Activities Unable to** No N/A Yes Determine |X|Were there any surviving siblings or other children in the household? Was there an adequate safety assessment of impending or immediate danger to surviving siblings/other children in the household named in X the report: Within 24 hours? X At 7 days? $|\mathsf{X}|$ At 30 days? Was there an approved Initial Safety Assessment for all surviving X siblings/ other children in the household within 24 hours? Are there any safety issues that need to be referred back to the local $\square$ district? When safety factors were present that placed the surviving siblings/other children in the household in impending or immediate |X| $\Box$ danger of serious harm, were the safety interventions, including parent/caretaker actions adequate?

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Fatality Risk Assessment / Risk Assessment Profile

#### Unable to Yes No N/A Determine $|\mathsf{X}|$ Was the risk assessment/RAP adequate in this case? During the course of the investigation, was sufficient information $\Box$ $\times$ gathered to assess risk to all surviving siblings/other children in the household? |X|Was there an adequate assessment of the family's need for services? Did the protective factors in this case require the LDSS to file a $\boxtimes$ $\Box$ petition in Family Court at any time during or after the investigation? Were appropriate/needed services offered in this case |X|Placement Activities in Response to the Fatality Investigation Unable to Yes No N/A Determine Did the safety factors in the case show the need for the surviving siblings/other children in the household be removed and placed in $\boxtimes$ foster care at any time during this fatality instigation? Were there surviving siblings/other children in the household $\boxtimes$ removed as a result of this fatality report/investigation? **Legal Activity Related to the Fatality** Was there legal activity as a result of the fatality investigation? There was no legal activity Services Provided to the Family in Response to the Fatality **Provided** Offered. Offered. Needed Needed CDR **Services** Unknown N/A Lead to After but but not but Death Refused if Used Offered Unavaliable Referral |X|П $\Box$ П **Bereavement counseling Economic support** $\boxtimes$ |X|**Funeral arrangements** Housing assistance П П $\square$ $\Box$ $|\mathsf{X}|$ Mental health services $\square$ $\Box$ Foster care

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Health care				×	
Legal services				×	
Family planning				×	
Homemaking Services				×	
Parenting Skills				×	
<b>Domestic Violence Services</b>				×	
<b>Early Intervention</b>				×	
Alcohol/Substance abuse				×	
Child Care	×				
Intensive case management				×	
Family or others as safety resources				X	
Other				X	

# **History Prior to the Fatality**

# **Child Information**

Did the child have a history of alleged child abuse/maltreatment?

Was there an open CPS case with this child at the time of death?

Yes
Was the child ever placed outside of the home prior to the death?

Yes
Were there any siblings ever placed outside of the home prior to this child's death?

Yes
Was the child acutely ill during the two weeks before death?

Yes

# **CPS - Investigative History Three Years Prior to the Fatality**

Date of SCR Report	Alleged Victim(s)	Alleged Perpetrator(s)	Allegation(s)	Status/Outcome	Compliance Issue(s)
02/11/2014	2-Sibling,Male, 1 Years	4-Mother, Female, 26 Years	Inadequate Guardianship	Indicated	No
	2-Sibling,Male, 1 Years	5-Father, Male, 32 Years	Inadequate Guardianship	Indicated	
	1-Deceased Child,Male, 1 Years	4-Mother, Female, 26 Years	Inadequate Guardianship	Indicated	
	1-Deceased Child,Male, 1 Years	4-Mother, Female, 26 Years	Lack of Supervision	Indicated	

1-Deceased Child,Male, 1 Years	5-Father,Male, 32 Years	Inadequate Guardianship	Indicated
1-Deceased Child,Male, 1 Years	Years	Lack of Supervision	
3-Sibling,Female, 7 Years	4-Mother,Female, 26 Years	Educational Neglect	Indicated
3-Sibling,Female, 7 Years	5-Father,Male, 32 Years	Educational Neglect	Indicated

# **Report Summary:**

The report alleged that the SC and his twin brother were diagnosed with Gauchers; a neurological disease which made them prone to having reflux. The parents were instructed on the dangers of propping bottles for boys but continued to do so raising concern that the boys could choke which MCDHS did not find evidence this occurred. MCDHS learned that the parents had not enrolled the seven-year-old (7yo) half-sister in school. There was also an incident where the SC was hospitalized due to ingesting an object that was given to him by a sibling when the parents were not supervising the children appropriately. The SC died during the investigation as a result of his medical condition.

**Determination:** Indicated **Date of Determination:** 08/12/2014

#### **Basis for Determination:**

The allegation of IG and LS were substantiated regarding the SC since the parents failed to exercise a minimum degree of care when they were not supervising the children. As a result, the SC ingested an object and was hospitalized. The SC's baseline functioning level never fully returned.

MCDHS substantiated the allegations of Educational Neglect regarding the 7yo sister since she missed school from mid-December to March. She was significantly behind academically and will be required to attend summer school.

The family remained active with preventive day care.

#### **OCFS Review Results:**

MCDHS conducted an adequate assessment of immediate danger to all children named in the report within 24 hours, completed adequate safety and risk assessments, made all appropriate collateral contacts, gathered sufficient information to make a determination for all allegations of abuse and maltreatment, and appropriately determined each allegation. Service needs were adequately assessed and appropriate services were offered. MCDHS consulted with their legal department and a decision was made not to pursue legal action. MCDHS also discussed and provided information about safe sleep with the family. MCDHS is to be commended on their investigation and their engagement with the family.

Are there Required Actions related to the compliance issue(s)?  $\square Yes \square No$ 

## CPS - Investigative History More Than Three Years Prior to the Fatality

There was no CPS history in NYS.

## **Known CPS History Outside of NYS**

The family had CPS history in Indiana and California. In Indiana, the 3-year-old (3yo) half-sister was born and spent four months in the hospital. In 3/11, there were concerns that the mother was not bonding with the 3yo half-sister so she was removed and placed in protective custody.

In California on 11/25/12, the 3yo half-sister was found with multiple bruises on her body and a large bruise on her forehead. The parents' explanation was that she fell from her crib. However, medical professionals found that the half-

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sister presented with major trauma, head injury, subdural bilateral frontal hematoma, retinal hemorrhages, liver injuries, multiple contusions in multiple stages of healing and abnormal weight loss. The 3yo half-sister was hospitalized from 11/25/12 to 1/24/13. According to medical providers, the 3yo half-sister's prematurity did not explain the injuries she suffered and the trauma was not consistent with the parent's version of events. Law enforcement took all of the children into custody and they were placed in foster care. The mother and the father were charged with felony custodian assault on a child resulting in great bodily harm, felony inflicting injury upon a child and a misdemeanor willful cruelty to a child. The criminal charges were withdrawn for insufficient evidence on 4/13/13. On 6/26/13, the Family Court Judge found all allegations true. The allegation of Physical Abuse was substantiated for the 3yo half-sister. Further allegations of General Neglect/Siblings at Risk for 7yo half-sister, six-year-old (6yo) half-sister, the SC and the brother were substantiated. The parents completed a parenting and general neglect class and counseling for physical abuse as a perpetrator.

On 8/6/13, a continued contested dispositional hearing was held, the children were adjudicated dependent children of the court and the children were placed with the mother and the father with Family Maintenance services. The parents were to complete 52 week physical abuse as a perpetrator program. The father was ordered to abstain from the use of alcohol and submit to random unannounced alcohol tests.

On 8/27/13, a report was opened for General Neglect when the 8mo sister was born at 33 weeks gestation. The report was unfounded.

# Services Open at the Time of the Fatality

## Required Action(s)

Are there Required Actions related to compliance issues for provisions of CPS or Preventive services ?  $\square Yes \square No$ 

#### **Preventive Services History**

On 2/26/14, MCDHS opened a family preservation preventive services case for the family due to parent service needs. There were concerns about the family's supports to meet the children's medical needs, the supervision the parents provided to the children, the school aged children were not enrolled in school, transportation issues and living in a crowded home environment. The SC and his brother were medically fragile with a syndrome that could be fatal and the 3yo half-sister had a chronic medical condition. The 3yo half-sister had received a developmental evaluation, the SC and the brother were engaged with Early Intervention Services, and the parents were registering for nursing services for the children. The case was closed by the contracted provider on 4/10/14 and MCDHS closed their case on 4/29/14. The case was closed as the family making progress on their goals. The Preventive Services SW recommended on-going preventive services and counseling for the parents but further services were declined by the parents. There were appropriate visits and contact between the CPS and preventive Caseworkers.

## Required Action(s)

Are there Required Actions related to the compliance issues for provision of Foster Care Services?

□Yes ⊠No

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# **Foster Care Placement History**

In Indiana in 3/11, the 3yo half-sister was removed and placed into protective custody. A fact finding hearing was held on 8/29/11 and the 3yo half-sister was found to be in need of services. On 10/11/11, a dispositional hearing was held and the mother's plan was to attend visitation, complete a parenting skills assessment and follow the recommendations, and attend medical skills training. On 5/18/12, the 3yo half-sister was returned to the mother since the mother participated in services and visitation. The petition was dismissed.

In California on 11/25/12, the children were removed from the parents. On 12/15/13, the court awarded joint legal custody

of the 7yo and 6yo half-sisters to the mother and the father. The mother was awarded sole physical custody of those children and jurisdiction was terminated. The mother was awarded sole legal and sole physical custody of the 3yo half-sister and jurisdiction was terminated. Jurisdiction was also terminated for the SC and the brother.
Legal History Within Three Years Prior to the Fatality
Was there legal activity as a result of the fatality investigation? There was no legal activity
Recommended Action(s)
Are there any recommended actions for local or state administrative or policy changes?
the there any recommended prevention activities resulting from the review.
Was there legal activity as a result of the fatality investigation? There was no legal activity  Recommended Action(s)

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